

Conserve

A Quarterly Publication from Moore Soil & Water Conservation District

P.O. Box 908
707 Pinehurst Avenue, Agriculture Center
Carthage, NC 28327

910-947-5183, Extension #3

The mission of the Moore County Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide policies and technical assistance that adequately protect the soil and water resources in Moore County.

Nowell Brown – Chairman

Glenn Bradley – Vice-Chairman

Larry Holder – Secretary/Treasurer

Billy Maness – Member

Albert Troutman – Member

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REMINDER

Practices must be maintained for the life of the contract under all cost share programs. Should a spot check reveal that you are not maintaining a practice, you may be required to pay the money back received for installing the practice. You are also responsible for using the practice for its intended purpose.

Farmer's Meeting Scheduled

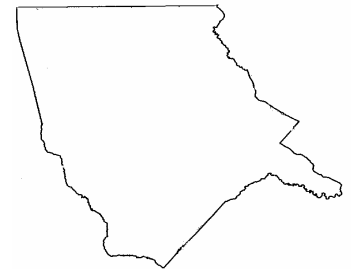
The Moore Soil & Water Conservation District is sponsoring a joint meeting of agencies to inform farmers of various programs and assistance. The program is scheduled for Tuesday, February 17th. This meeting will allow time for representatives from the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Moore Soil and Water Conservation District, Cooperative Extension, Farm Services Agency, and the Forestry Service to inform participants of cost share assistance available.

NRCS and Soil & Water Conservation will announce availability and facts about WHIP, EQIP, and the NC Agricultural Cost Share Programs.

Other important issues to discuss will include wetlands regulations and phosphorus loss assessment. Jimmy Randolph from the Poultry Federation will speak on poultry concerns. A presentation about the Voluntary Ag District potential will also be shown. A question and answer period will be allowed after each session.

Cooperative Extension will touch on Agri-tourism, update the farmers on the tobacco buyout, speak on the Meat-Goat Cooperative, and introduce their new Cross-Country Area Specialized Poultry Agent, Dan Campeau.

The Farm Services Agency



plans to update farmers about upcoming programs for 2004.

The Forestry Service will discuss forest land implementation.

The program will begin at 12:00 Noon, with lunch being provided to all in attendance. Please contact the Moore Soil & Water Conservation District by February 10th at 910-947-5183 extension #3 to register to attend this important meeting. You will not want to miss this one!

Conservation Security Program

The proposed rule for the Conservation Security Program (CSP) is available for comment. You may access it via the Internet through the NRCS home page at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>. Select "Farm Bill".

NRCS is seeking comments on all facets of the program. Please send your comments by mail to Conservation Operations Division, NRCS, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013 or by email to david.mckay@usda.gov; Attn:

Conservation Security Program.

Comments will be accepted for 60 days. All comments will be considered as NRCS develops the final rule.

CSP is a voluntary conservation program to support ongoing conservation stewardship of agricultural lands by providing payments to producers who maintain and enhance the condition of natural resources. CSP will identify and reward those farmers and ranchers

who are meeting the highest standards of conservation and environmental management on their operations.

In addition, CSP will create powerful incentives for other producers to meet those same standards of conservation performance.

In short, CSP will reward the best and motivate the rest. Through these rewards and incentives, CSP will build a foundation of natural resource

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Conservation Security Program

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conservation that will provide benefits to the public for generations to come.

CSP will help producers maintain conservation stewardship and implement additional conservation practices that provide added environmental enhancement. The conservation benefits gained will help farms and ranches be more economically and environmentally sustainable and will increase the natural resource benefits provided to all Americans.

The first CSP sign-up will be offered in selected priority watersheds across the Nation. Producers within these watersheds may submit an application once they meet eligibility criteria outlined below and complete a benchmark inventory documenting the existing conservation treatment on each land use within the agricultural operation for land to be enrolled. NRCS will provide the necessary materials for completing the inventory prior to the first sign-up.

Based on the benchmark inventory and a follow-up interview, NRCS will determine which program tier

the applicant could participate.

Both the producer and the producer's operation must first meet the basic eligibility criteria:

- ◆ The land must be privately owned or Tribal land and the majority of the land must be located within a selected priority watershed.
- ◆ The applicant must be in compliance with highly erodible and wetland provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, have an active interest in the agricultural operation, and have control of the land for the life of the contract.
- ◆ The applicant must share in the risk of producing any crop or livestock and be entitled to a share in the crop or livestock marketed from the operation.

All applicants must meet the following minimum tier eligibility and contract requirements, plus any additional requirements in the sign-up announcement.

- ◆ For Tier I, the producer must have addressed water quality

and soil quality to the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) standards on part of the agricultural operation prior to acceptance.

- ◆ For Tier II, the producer must have addressed water quality and soil quality to the FOTG standards on the entire agricultural operation prior to acceptance and agree to address one additional resource by the end of the contract period.
- ◆ For Tier III, the producer must have addressed all resource concerns to a resource management system level that meets the FOTG standards on the entire agricultural operation before acceptance into the program and agree to additional enhancement activities outlined in the sign-up announcement.

Soil quality practices include crop rotations, cover crops, tillage practices, prescribed grazing, nutrient and manure management, and providing adequate wind barriers.

Water quality practices include conservation tillage, filter strips, terraces, grassed waterways, managed access to streams, nutrient and pesticide management, prescribed graz-

ing, and irrigation water management.

CSP Contract payments include one or more of the following:

- ◆ An annual base component for the benchmark conservation treatment.
- ◆ An annual existing practice component for those maintaining existing conservation practices.
- ◆ A one-time new practice component for additional needed practices.
- ◆ An enhancement component for exceptional conservation effort and additional conservation practices or activities that provide increased resource benefits beyond the prescribed level. The five enhancement components are: installing additional conservation measures, addressing locally identified conservation needs, participating in watershed related activities, on-farm research and demonstration, and assessment and evaluation activities.

For more information please contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service/ Moore Soil and Water Conservation District at 947-5183, extension #3.

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 SOUTHERN STATES

Tier Payments for CSP Participation:

- ◆ For Tier I, contracts are for 5 years; maximum payment is \$20,000 annually.
- ◆ For Tier II, contracts are for 5-10 years; maximum payment is \$35,000 annually.
- ◆ For Tier III, contracts are for 5-10 years; maximum payment is \$45,000 annually.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program that encourages creation of high quality wildlife habitats that support wildlife populations of National, State, Tribal and local significance. Through WHIP, the NRCS provides

technical and financial assistance to landowners and others to develop upland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitat areas on their property. Through WHIP, NRCS works with private landowners and operators; Conservation Districts; and Federal,

State, and Tribal agencies. Funding for WHIP comes from the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Most efforts from previous WHIP contracts have concentrated on improving upland wildlife habitat conditions across the Nation.

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Species benefited from WHIP activities include the grasshopper sparrow, bob-white quail, swift fox, short-eared owl, Karner-blue butterfly, gopher tortoise, Louisiana black bear, Eastern collared lizard, Bachman sparrow, ovenbird, and acorn woodpecker

Stake Holder Group Meeting

All Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) across the State are taking the lead to conduct a public stake holder meeting as well as a local work group meeting. Moore County SWCD held their stake holder meeting December 11th. Approximately 13 were in attendance. The meeting was advertised in the local newspaper and published in the Farm Service Agency's newsletter.

The purpose of the meeting was to provide broad input into the local conservation

program so that the process of locally led conservation can be implemented by and through the Local Work Group. Stake holder groups are very effective in providing local conservation districts meaningful data and perspectives that will assist them in developing and guiding the local conservation program and in expanding the awareness and base of support for conservation programs and district activities. Input from the group are not program specific but focused on the conservation program as a whole.

SWCD Chair Nowell Brown chaired the stakeholder meeting. Those participating expressed the greatest need in Moore County to be water quality. There were several issues discussed that lead to the improvement of water quality as follows:

- ♦ Litter Production & Phosphorus Loss Assessment
- ♦ Farmland preservation
- ♦ Animal Mortality
- ♦ Livestock Exclusions
- ♦ Mosquito Control
- ♦ Erosion Control

The local work group, which membership is limited to agency representatives, will

consider these issues to advise NRCS for the need for eligible conservation practices. They will also recommend any new, innovative conservation practices needed. The local application evaluation process will be studied, including the application ranking criteria and application periods.

A suggestion was presented by the stakeholders that the NRCS and SWCD should work with Cooperative Extension and the Health Department to consider programs for mosquito control.

District Welcomes Jeanette Fuller

When Kathy Welch resigned to take a new position as Teacher Assistant with the Chatham County Schools, the District was at a loss for a Secretary. Jeanette Fuller from the Westmoore Community was selected to fill the position. She brings with her

experience in Excel and spreadsheets. Along with many other duties, she can assist clients in scheduling the drills. Her prior employment was with Springs Industries in Biscoe.


Jeanette is married and has one son. She attends Beulah

Baptist Church in Bennett.


Jeanette is always ready to assist when a customer calls or stops by the office. She greets everyone with a warm friendly smile! Be sure to stop by to meet her if you haven't already!

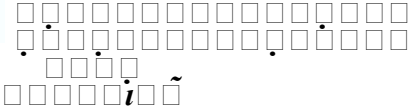


Jeanette Fuller, Secretary




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*The staff members of the Moore County Soil and
Water Conservation District are available to assist
you with your conservation needs.*

*Alice Caviness—District Administrator
Kevin Williams—District Conservationist
Jerry Hall—Natural Resource Specialist
Jonathan Russell—Natural Resource Specialist
Jeanette Fuller—Secretary*

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

www.moorecountync.gov

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

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Conservation Districts convene local work groups to identify local wildlife habitat priorities. The local work groups provide input to the State Technical Committee that advises the State Conservationist in the development of a State WHIP plan. The State WHIP plan serves as a guide for the development of the State WHIP ranking criteria. Persons interested in entering into a cost-share agreement with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to develop wildlife habitat may file an application at any time. Participants voluntarily limit future use of the land for a period of time, but retain private ownership. NRCS works

with the participant to develop a wildlife habitat development plan. This plan becomes the basis of the cost share agreement between NRCS and the participant. NRCS provides cost-share payments to landowners under these agreements that are usually 5 to 10 years in duration, depending upon the practices to be installed. There are shorter-term agreements to install practices that are needed to meet wildlife emergencies, approved by the NRCS State Conservationist. NRCS also provides greater cost share assistance to landowners who enter into agreements of 15 years, or more practices on essential plant and animal habitat. NRCS

can use up to 15 % of its available WHIP funds for this purpose. NRCS does not place limits on the number of acres that can be enrolled in the program or the amount of payment made; however, some States may choose to establish such requirements. Projects that provide valuable wildlife habitat and practices that will improve habitat conditions for declining species are welcomed. NRCS continues to provide assistance to landowners after completion of habitat development activities. This assistance may be in the form of monitoring habitat practices, reviewing management guidelines, or providing basic biological and engineering advice on how to

achieve optimum results for targeted species. Applications are accepted through a continuous sign-up process. Applications may be obtained and filed at any time with the local NRCS, SWCD office.

FY2004 Funding

Depending on when received, applications will be completed during three batching periods:

March 5

June 25

August 22

Applications that are completed and are not funded will be carried over into the 2005 waiting list.

REMINDER-EQIP 2004

Applications are now being accepted for participation in the 2004 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). In 2003, requests for cost share assistance greatly exceeded funding available. Applications that were not funded in 2003 will be re-ranked and will be eligible, according to ranking, for funding in 2004 as dollars permit. For more information please call 947-5183, extension #3.



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